

Connecticut General Assembly - Joint Committee on Housing
Legislative Office Building, Hartford, CT 06106
March 1, 2016

Re: RB 155 AN ACT CONCERNING THE ALLOCATION OF LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDITS

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Housing:

My name is Supriyo Chatterjee and I reside in West Hartford Connecticut. For your consideration, I would like to submit my public comments in support of RB 155 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE ALLOCATION OF LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDITS. This bill will permit the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority to design the Qualified Allocation Plan of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program. It will help improve upon the supportive housing of the low income populace in Connecticut. **There are several reasons to support RB 155 but I would like to emphasize, the crucial ones of public health and healthcare where housing is considered a major socio-economic determining factor.**

It is well substantiated that "Zip code [is a] better predictor of health than genetic code" and unfortunately, this is more prevalent in Connecticut. The Connecticut Association of Directors of Health, in its Health Equity Index showed variations in neighborhoods for a given social determinant or health outcome. An example report depicts the strong correlation between housing and perinatal care – "poorer housing is strongly associated with poorer care and management of developing fetuses and newborn infants." A significant portion of people in the covered area are under Connecticut's Medicaid program which covers over 750,000 people (20% population) in the state. Overall, much of Medicaid enrollees receive some form of supportive housing.

The Connecticut Department of Public Health (CTDPH) in its 2009 Connecticut Health Disparities Report showed striking disparities that exist across town lines, among racial and ethnic groups, and between urban and rural populations. CTDPH has also implemented a 'Healthy Homes Initiative' to mitigate the health disparities that emanates from communities, neighborhoods and housing.

The linkage between supportive housing and health outcomes can also be viewed from the perspective of economic costs – Medicaid budget totals approx. \$6bn which is 14% of the state budget. So, any improvements in supportive housing and health outcomes can substantially contribute, for the better, to the fiscal bottom line of Connecticut.

'Housing' remains one of the best medicine. I urge you to support this very important measure that will also ensure healthier people in our state.

Sincerely,

Supriyo B. Chatterjee
West Hartford CT 06107
E: sbc@gmx.us
T: 860.897.2261

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